The Interspecies Newsletter

Spring 1997

Published Quarterly by Interspecies Communication Inc.

The Sun Interview

IC director, Jim Nollman, was recently interviewed by Derrick Jensen for The Sun, *a wonderful little magazine published monthly in North Carolina. Since the subject dwells on so many issues pertinent to the function of this organization it seems proper to reprint it for all our subscribers to read. Published by permission.*

DJ: It's hard to pin down exactly what you do. How do you describe your work?

JN: Much of what I do is an attempt to break down artificial barriers, such as those that exist between art and science, home and wilderness, subject and object. Working through the non-profit, Interspecies Communication Inc. (IC), I've produced the kind of Arctic expeditions you might expect from National Geographic, but instead of bringing along a bunch of guys carrying gear to measure this and that, I bring artists whose work bridges the gap between subject and object. Onsite, we explore the relationship between art and ecology. Oftentimes, we try to imagine what field biology would be like if it gave up its premise of the collection of information as the major justification for its existence. Or we try to imagine a modern culture that drops the preposterous ruse that its practitioners are objective (As if a human being can be invisible, or would even want to be neutral given the current state of our relationship with nature).

DJ: Can you give me an example?

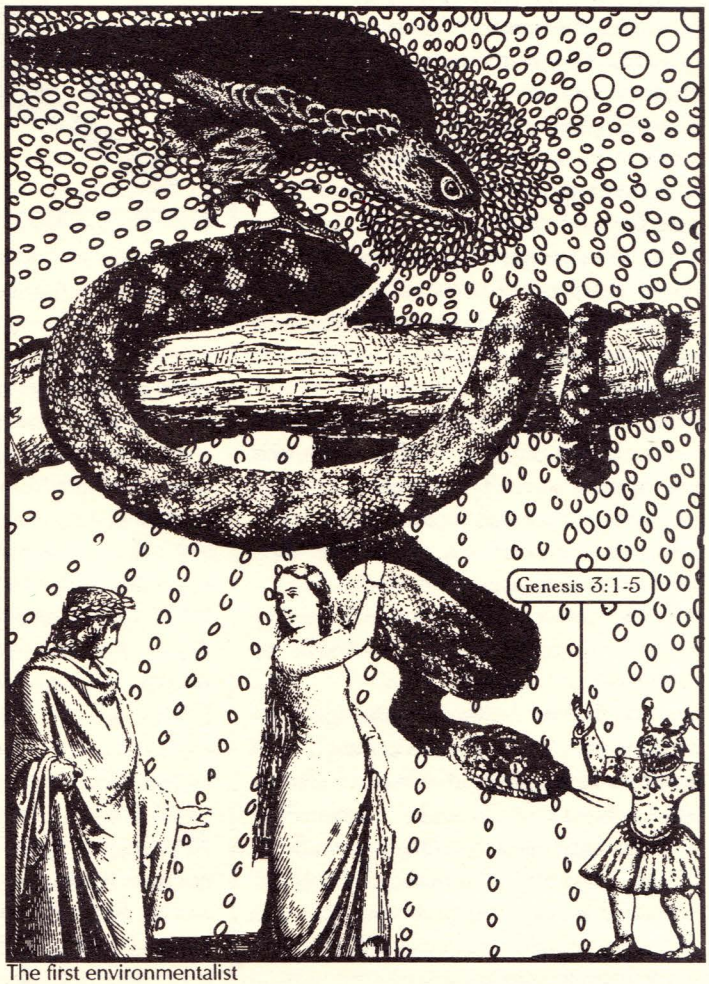
JN: IC once sponsored a trip to the MacKenzie Delta in Arctic Canada. One of the three guys we invited, Daniel Dancer, spent a lot of his time onsite assembling fragile constructs from found materials like beluga whale bones and old pieces of cloth. His point was to mourn the loss of animal habitat we found there.

DJ: What good does that do? Does it prevent habitat loss?

JN: What does art ever do? It alters perceptions, in this case about what human beings can do to respect a wild place. Making a whalebone sculpture may seem futile to some, but the idea of mourning a dying species has great merit. When Daniel's work was seen by Inuit whale hunters, some got very angry. Others were confused, and still others thanked us. On the other hand, Canadian bureaucrats on the scene seemed uniformly annoyed.

DJ: Why do you think we don't respect the power of art more than we do?

JN: Too many engineers, biologists, and politicians–and I'd include many leaders of the conservation movement in that



The first environmentalist

group–think art is a fine subject for dabbling, but of little value in the real world. I think urban artists, especially in New York City are partly to blame for the marginalization of art. The art establishment is simply too self-indulgent, too enamoured of shock for shock's sake, too obsessed with urban alienation. Art isn't just urban, just as contemporary art is not only "modern".

DJ: How do we move the focus of art away from the cities?

JN: I think every environmental education course should add some basic art history to its reading list. Maybe then environmentalists would start to comprehend what was once common knowledge everywhere–that art has the power to inspire, lead, teach, propagandize, and especially alter entrenched perceptions. Protesters, biologists, and envionrmental lobbyists need the input of artists if they ever hope to inspire the greater populace to revere nature on its own behalf. So let's enlist more artists to teach us new

ways to mourn the loss of habitat. You see, the environmental crisis we face is a crisis in human perception. And the job of artists has always been to help culture perceive the world anew.

DJ: Can you give an example of bad perceiving?

JN: IC spent five years sponsoring artists to travel to the Arctic to interact with beluga whales. Of all nonhuman species, belugas may possess the clearest rudiments of true language. We wanted other people besides scientists and wardens to have access to these beings. In one place I went, a high profile, government-sponsored scientific project was monitoring beluga movements in an attempt to better regulate what native people could kill them. But strip away the hifalutin language, and you could see what those biologists were actually doing was driving individual whales up onto a beach with motorboats , and then using electric drills to punch holes in their backs to affix radio collars. We later learned the batteries on the collars only lasted a few weeks, and the whales weren't even going to start migrating for another month. So the whole thing was a test run until the next generation of batteries were made.

Yet this project was consistently getting written up as providing "us with vital information about whales." This project–drilling holes into the backs of whales–was, effectively the centerpiece of the human species's intellectual relationship to beluga whales and a microcosm of our relationship with animals around the world. Tragically, it is not the totality of our relationship with beluga whales. We also kill them off with industrial pollution, we yank baby whales from their mothers so they can spend the rest of their lives swimming in circles in an oceanarium. Native people kill them with semi-automatic rifles and fast motor boats as an expression of so-called aboriginal culture. And we write children's pop songs about how wonderful they are.

DJ: So I assume your trips protest these forms of "relatedness".

JN: Not exactly. I don't believe protest is an effective long-range tool for changing people's minds. People have to want to do it, which is why those of us who love beluga whales or salmon or big trees have to come up with new tools for changing people's

Raven Goat, Turkey , 1500

hearts and minds. Certainly, my writing and my speaking about these field projects possesses elements of polemicism and environmentalism. But I could just as easily dredge up other examples to explain this work as mystical, scientific, tragic, comic, minimalist, surreal, and so on. The wearing of many hats has always been a basic operating principle of IC.

DJ: I'm interested to know how you think this work is scientific.

JN: Everyone who participates in one of these trips becomes a student of the relationship between humans and animals. Is that science? I suppose it depends whom you ask. But when you read that biologists are monitoring the way orcas relate to whalewatching boats by counting respirations per minute, you don't question if it's science. But if I were to I tell you we anchored a boat in the same bay for six consecutive summers, played music into the water every night at 10 PM, and recorded the musical interactions with the orcas, would that be science? I remember a well-known biologist who was very interested in this particular project, but lamented the fact that we never bothered to replicate our interactions. I told him jazz musicians never play the same note twice.

DJ: The orcas sang with you on a regular basis?

JN: Actually, it wasn't "the orcas" singing with us, but primarily two orcas, a mother and her son, who came around almost every night. The mother was well known in the area for her friendliness and curiosity around humans. The son was an inspired soloist. His vocalizations sometimes reminded me of a Charley Parker solo.

DJ: What tools do you bring along on your explorations?

JN: Always a blank book, to jot notes about the trip. I also do a few pen and ink drawings, I call them bubble art, which end up in the newsletter. I've been doing them for years as a way to depict the energy fields I perceive flowing from animals and plants.

DJ: And musical instruments as well?

JN: I bring three or four along, both acoustic and electronic. Playing music with whales is the shtick for which I suppose I'm best known. But it wasn't always whales. My first public experience of playing music with animals happened when I was commissioned by Pacifica Radio to record music with turkeys as a two hour taped concert of background music played over the air during Thanksgiving dinner. As you can see, my background has far more John Cage in it than JohnLilly.

DJ: But what instruments do you play?

JN: Over the years I've collected several acoustic instruments that either float or can be played underwater. My favorite underwater instrument is dolphin sticks, like the claves you hear a lot in Latin music. My sticks were invented by Australian Aborigines who played them to attract dolphins, who then brought them fish. More often than that I use one of two electric guitars connected to an underwater sound system that uses hydrophones to listen and underwater speakers to transmit. Think of the sound system as a telephone line to the whales.

DJ: What, precisely, do you do when you play with whales?

JN: Before we get into that, I think it's important to describe some of the rules IC insists upon. We set up our boat/recording studio some distance from the whales. That way, they have to come to the boat if they're interested, and there's no chance of harassment. We never, ever chase them. Nor do we ever transmit at a volume louder than a small outboard motor. Whales perceive their world primarily through sound, and we don't want to gum up their environment with the acoustic equivalent

of spotlights shining in their faces.

DJ: It's hard to imagine all that sound being made and heard underwater.

JN: Before motorized boats came into existence, some of the great whales could hear each other across entire oceans. If they wish, orcas can vocalize at the volume of a jet airplane at take-off. A group of IC core members spent many summers playing music with the same pod of orcas on a boat off the west coast of Canada. During the period, we invited literally hundreds of people to join the project onsite. Since orcas live in families, we thought it important to give an assortment of people access to the sound system. We let children bang on synthesizers and shake rattles. For three summers in a row we even invited Tibetan Lamas to chant their prayers in the water.

DJ: What other species of whales do you know musically?

JN: This past summer, 1996, I worked with humpbacks in Alaska, and listened to them stunning schools of herring by singing at them. Maybe singing isn't the right word to explain a sound that kills fish. But it sure sounded beautiful, like angels crying. For the humpbacks, I spent some time banging out a beat on an Irish drum on the deck of the boat. I mean, how could I possibly match their intensity?

For a few years I worked with pilot whales off the Canary Islands on the German boat, *Kairos*. I often played electric guitar when I could hear the whales but not see them. About half the time the whales eventually appeared around the boat.

DJ: What did you play for the pilot whales?

JN: There were usually a lot of percussionists on those trips, so I often played syncopated music, you know, James Brown riffs, or reggae bass lines. Anything with big spaces between notes. I cued the drummers not to fill in all the spaces. That way the pilot whales had their own space in the musical fabric. The boat was getting set up for a long term interaction with whales and they invited me onboard to kind of lay down some basic rules and techniques. The ultimate goal was to get the whales to join the band. After I left they got a reggae band on board. I heard a recording, and its uncanny the way one pilot whale fills in this single space in each measure. I mean reggae is very complex rhythmically. It's difficult enough for human musicians to get it right. When I hear things like that I know the whales are very creative beings. Sometimes I think they must have a mathematical grasp of sound progressions to be able to pick up stuff so well.

DJ: Tell me more about your techniques.

JN: Over the past year, during trips to Okinawa to work with humpbacks, and then later in Alaska with humpbacks, I've been playing Indian ragas into the water. This is a music that developed in India to interact with birds firstly and the universe secondly. As long as the drone is going, the music is continuous. The melodic structure is uniquely conversational. I listen, then play a snippet of a melody. The animal listens. I stop the melody, but keep the drone going. The animal vocalizes. I wait until it finishes. Then I answer but never try to copy them.

DJ: You make it sound so methodical.

JN: It's easy to describe, but difficult to do. And it's hardly methodical. I noticed long ago that musicians get very excited when they mimic a whale. They think everything they play is interspecies communication, without recognizing that the whale would probably be making the same sound if the musician were silent. That's why I like to vary things a bit, but remain subtle. I might copy the whale's inflection but shift the tone by half a step. But you know, there are so many ways people try to interact with whales and dolphins. I think most of it is valid. Some people try much more mind-to-mind stuff. IC often invites them along on trips as well. But I like to keep focused on the music. And once in a blue moon I communicate in such a meaningful manner that all my education about the natural world has to be put on hold.

DJ: What happens?

JN: I experience grace. That's what communication with nonhumans is really all about. When communication happens, no matter how subtle it is, no matter if it doesn't register on some meter, or on tape or on film, I feel as though I've been blessed. It is the greatest blessing of my life. In some very basic way, I suppose it's the same thing that other people experience through religion.

DJ: You feel there's a spiritual aspect to playing music with animals?

JN: I've always felt that the primary purpose of religion is not intellectual, for instance to explain a mysterious universe we can never really know. It's sensuous, a feeling that places us in a situation where blessing can occur. When that happens, however it happens, the universe suddenly seems less distant. We all need that experience, whether we find it though religion, or through playing music with whales.

DJ: Your most recent book is about gardening. Do you feel communion there as well? I mean, do you relate to your broccolis and snapdragons the same way you relate to whales?

JN: I've always been an avid gardener. And as I said earlier, my work is about helping tranform the way our culture perceives the natural environment. On that level, whales and dolphins serve as a strong metaphor. One biologist I know refers to it as *the lure of the megafauna*. But no matter how popular cetaceans are, they remain "out there", away from people's daily lives. By contrast, gardening is the way more people touch the earth than any other. The majority of people who garden also consider it the most creative act in their lives. That's the main impetus for my book, *Why We Garden*.

DJ: So how do flowers compare with whales as communicating beings?

JN: Actually my answer may surprize you. I've worked with whales for years, and have had many interesting experiences with them, a lot of joy and laughter and intellectual stimulation and media attention, but never has it reached the deeply personal and spiritual level I've had with a garden and with the whole of my own local environment. Working with

Akwan, The Lion Bell Ringer, Persia

dolphins, especially, leaves me feeling happy–they're so vibrant, so smart. But it's too quick, too ungrounded maybe. What moves me deeply inside has less to do with intelligence and more to do with a sense of communion with the slow turn of the seasons. The feel of dirt. Growing plants. Earth. To be most precise about my terms here, I like to think of what I aspire to as a middle ground between communion and communication. While you can have communication without communion–I mean our entire culture is based on it–you cannot have communion without some form of communication. It is on the playing field of this middle ground that my experience of feeling blessed takes place. My intent here is not to color this relationship with a magic aura–as happens entirely too often with people who get their hit with dolphins–but to make this sense of blessing more mundane, a normal part of living. When it occurs in the garden, I consider it an extension of weeding or planting.

DJ: You know I'm going to ask you for an example.

JN: My family just got back from a three-week trip. Even though someone always takes good care of the garden while we're away, when we return the garden looks kind of off-balance. But the plants start to perk up after our first day, and by the second everything looks back to normal. This happens all the time. The plants–or is it the entire garden–seems to know we're here, and they respond. I'm not sure why this is. But I do know that for at least an hour every day I walk around the garden, and I stop to stand in front of plants. I don't know what I'm doing while I stand there, but I am convinced that this presence, this connection, this comunion, is why the plants look better when we're here.

Bird Woman, Persia 12th century

DJ: How do you verify that?

JN: Who cares? I love when those so-called irrational happenings become more real to me than an article of faith. In this case, I know my garden perks up when I am around, just as I know that the hat on my head is made of linen. I experience each thing directly.

The sense of being blessed comes when I surrender to this natural communion/communication that defies the industrial explanation of our existence. Although the culture still tends to laugh up its sleeve at communication beyond substance (such as telepathy), I sometimes wonder if developing those kinds of experiences actually holds the key to our grandchildren's future.

DJ: You realize of course that, when you discuss these intuitions in public, you run the risk of being considered "unscientific," some sort of a woo-woo master.

JN: It always becomes a trap for anyone who tries to speak to this stuff. How do we marry the spiritual and the empirical without coming across as a charlatan? How do we write about that? It's an incredible dance. And one that's very difficult to succeed at. I don't know if any of us writers who try ever will, completely. But it's worthwhile. All of us just have to keep trying to describe what we perceive. I'm always striving to discover new metaphors, new modes of communication to help people understand a little better what it feels like to be connected with nature. The next step–actual reconnection–is up to them.

DJ: Does it ever bother you?

JN: To get to do this dance with nature for so many years, I've had to learn not to take any of it too seriously. Especially myself.

DJ: Industrial civilization is causing the greatest mass extinction in the history of the planet. I have a hard time taking that lightly. What is the danger of taking yourself seriously?

JN: The concepts we're talking about changing are threatening to people's basic ideas about how the universe works. I mean, we're having a conversation here about the garden perking up, or about playing ragas with whales. This stuff turns off some people. And I want as many people as possible to give this concept of communion a chance because it's so incredibly heartwarming when it happens. If I push it on them, they won't hear it. Different people talking about the same basic thing–Rupert Sheldrake, Virginia Coyle, David Abram, Terence McKenna, to name a few–have assumed different approaches and guises to enable themselves to talk about this subject meaningfully. As a musician trained in theatre, I like to keep my own approach non-preachy and yet awe-inspiring. Both are attributes that a musical approach handles very well. I don't like to come on too explicitly. If the music between a guitar player and a beluga whale is happening then you just hear it. Perhaps because my background is in theater, my approach also displays something of the clown and the role-player. Some people are very sure I'm doing science, others see me as an environmentalist or an animal rights advocate. It's all there. I don't care to say, "No, I'm not that one, I'm this one."

DJ: You mentioned that these concepts are threatening. In *Why We Garden*, you quote Michael J. Cohen, "How convenient to conceive mud, water, and stones, to be dead; to decide that other life has no consciousness, pain, or equality. What an incredible alibi we have created to soothe our guilt of killing for profit."

JN: If the Earth is dead it feels no pain. We couldn't build the Empire State Building unless the Earth was dead, because we couldn't hurt the Earth so much just to make a big building. The entire culture is based on that suppposition.

DJ: A lot of people believe that nonhumans are "instinctoids" whose every action is determined by their nature. How do you respond to that?

JN: Making animals go against their nature is like building skyscrapers. During the Vietnam War dolphins were trained by the United States military to inject exploding carbon dioxide cartridges into divers. That is clearly against a dolphin's nature. But the animals were treated as objects, which is another way of perceiving them as logistically dead. It's another case of the human disorder of evading truth by

Goat Man, Persian, 15th century

permitting ends to justify means.

DJ: When people write about human to nonhuman communication, the approach is generally this one: "Can nonhumans communicate or can't they?" I think that's only a small part of the issue. The larger question is, "Who among humans is capable of listening?"

JN: We need to make a distinction between listening and hearing. I believe I listen better than many people. In other words I consciously make the effort to perceive the world through my ears. but I still don't hear very well. My ears need more exercise. Whether or not we hear, it is important to listen. Just the act of trying will change a lot of our perceptions about nature. I wonder if it's even possible to hear the natural world anymore if you live in a city. So if listening is important, and the city makes it difficult, then maybe we use that as one criteria for re-thinking our cities. The Green Cities Movement takes that idea to heart.

DJ: Can you give an example of listening versus hearing?

JN: There is a story that applies to the related question of "who can listen." Years ago I interviewed a dolphin trainer in New Zealand by the name of Frank Robson. He had become known for his ability to teach dolphins tricks without giving the animals food or visual clues. He said he did it through mind-to-mind contact, although somebody doing dolphin experiments in a pool might throw up their hands and say he was giving the animals unconscious visual clues. I believe Frank was a master at hearing and speaking to the dolphins. But there were some days he couldn't connect. The dolphins ignored him in favor of certain members of the audience, usually pre-adolescent girls. Because the dolphins he worked with were both male and female, he knew they weren't just sniffing hormones. Something else was happening. He told me he talked to the parents of the girls, but wasn't able to discover much of a pattern. I've always felt that maybe we should be involving more girls this age in any consciousness work involving animals. We are all able to hear the natural world when we are young. And then we just lose it. It gets trained out of us. Perhaps those girls had been able to hold on to the ability to hear, at least for a little while. Frank was unique because at 70 he could still hear.

DJ: You mentioned the possibility that Frank Robson could be giving visual clues, with the implication that this might diminish what he was doing. That reminds me of the Clever Hans story, which has always upset me. Clever Hans was a horse taught to answer questions by tapping his hoof. The evidence suggested that Hans could multiply, do square roots, and so on. When the horse was subjected to rigorous tests, however, it ended up that instead of having these tremendous mathematical skills, Clever Hans was paying attention to unconscious visual clues, such as noticing when his testers relaxed. The inevitable conclusion, even today, is that because Hans couldn't find the square root of one hundred and sixty-nine, he wasn't clever. This makes me mad, because it ignores his ability to read the emotions of the questioner. To be able to understand another's emotions, and to act on that understanding, of course fails to quality as intelligence, because our culture belittles the emotions of humans and nonhumans alike. But given a choice, would you rather have a friend who is able to read and respond to your emotions, or one that can find the square root of one hundred and sixty-nine? Which is the more important survival skill?

Odds and Ends

Whale Sculpture

Cetaceans have long been a favorite form of artists making key chains, paperweights, and jewelry. Two French sculptors living in Marseilles, Bruno Lehoux and Philippe Lopez, have recently formed The Balaena Group, to market a much more ambitious art modeled on whale anatomy. Besides key chains and paperweights, they also fabricate coat hooks, cast concrete benches in the shape of flukes, and "the delfin chair", which feels like being held by a life-sized dolphin tail. More ambitious still, are their five ton, ten foot high, life-sized humpback whale sculptures and fountains, with internal pumps, colored lights, built-in sound systems to play whale sounds, and sheets of water falling off the back end of the flukes. Chairs cost $990. The fountain starts at $410,000. For a brochure write:

Argonautes Sarl, 7, Bd Chancel; 13008 Marseille, France. Fax: 04.91.72.38.02

Baboon Revenge

One of the most powerful accounts we've ever heard of animal societies working together in a strategic manner tells a tale of revenge and two needless murders. As reported by *Earthweek*, a diary of the planet December 18, 1996:

More than thirty angry baboons killed a man out of revenge in the Tororo district of southeastern Uganda according to a report from the New Vision newspaper. A local council official said that the human victim, Okecho, killed a male baboon for damaging crops on his corn and banana plantation. More than thirty other baboons soon converged at Okecho's compound and "mourned like human beings" before carrying their fallen comrade into the forest. Neighbors reported that the baboons returned the next day and stormed the farmer's house, knocking down his door. A journalist reaching the scene reports Okecho lying in a pool of blood with

a large hole in his chest where his heart had been pulled out.

Dolphin Top-Ten Hits

An American researcher claims that dolphins imitate the songs of popular musical hits in their own vocalizations. They learn the songs because of an ability to perceive AM radio frequencies. Dr. Hector Corona slowed down dolphin recordings by a factor of four which-at least to his ears--revealed the melodies of top ten songs by Mariah Carey and Bryan Adams. Based on Corona's theory, dolphins catch the melodies in the sound waves transmitted by radio-broadcasts on ships and on beaches. (Translated by Vilma Lauhakangas, 11 yrs old, from the Finnish newspaper, *Alueuutiset*, November 21, 1996)

We're Apes

Molecular biologists in Australia and new Zealand offer striking evidence that gorillas and chimpanzees should be reclassified in the same genus as homo sapiens, based on similarities in DNA. In a paper entitled, "Human Origins and Evolution", the group demonstrated that human DNA differs a mere 1.6 percent from chimps, and 1.7 percent from gorillas. The similarities are a result of an upright walking ancestor common to these species as well as to humans. the scientists conclude that the genus *Homo* should be formally revised, to be based on DNA instead of the current artificial classification based on appearance.

According to Professor Peter Singer, the artificial classifications remain in place only because of fierce opposition from religious conservatives who insist upon the taxonomic uniqueness of the human species despite much evidence to the contrary. Singer concludes that a reclassification is in order, and that, "acknowledging that other animals are members of the same genus as ourselves will remind people that we are animals, and will shrink the gulf that we imagine divides us from animals."

— *Animal's Agenda*, October 1996.

Sperm Whale Link

The following is a conceptual outline for a computer-based project intended to allow a Sperm Whale to vocalize sequences of visual images to a human and, in response, to allow a human to project sequences of visual images in the form of sonic holograms back to a Sperm Whale. The proposal arrived recently, unsolicited, in our email box from jerrydoran@dolphinsociety.org.

Recordings are made of many types of Sperm Whale echolocation beams. The recordings are then played back, projected at various objects, individuals, interactions between objects and individuals, interactions between individuals etc. The echoes, the "sonic holograms" are then recorded correlated to the corresponding visual image. A "virtual keyboard"is then created for the Sperm Whales by projecting the entire vocabulary from separate underwater speakers at very low amplitudes. The Sperm Whales can select a concept from the vocabulary by sonaring the source of the weak signal. The signal is then automatically boosted to conversational amplitudes and the visual image projected on two computer screens for simultaneous viewing by the humans and Sperm Whales.

A human can select concepts by touching a virtual keyboard.

The concepts represented by the visual/sonic images could progress toward congruity in human and sperm whale perception through ongoing communication and through deepening of sperm whale/human friendships. Regard the computer translator as a communication acquisition device, a sort of "Rosetta Stone". After extensive deepening of congruity of perception, The question "How do you communicate this concept or how do you say this?" could be asked and answered. Ultimately, a sperm whale might be able to acquire English while a human could acquire sperm whale vocal meaning.

Man Griffin, Armenian carpet design

Help IC Fundraise

As every reader of this newsletter knows by now, IC is fundraising to assemble a digital audio workstation to facilitate our communication work with whales and dolphins. When the system is in place, we should be able to try out many new concepts in communication research that are only possible in the digital realm. For instance, with a sampler and a MIDI instrument, we could start a project to test the sperm whale theory presented above.

Towards our goal, IC has recently received pledges from several companies to donate or loan necessary parts. These include:

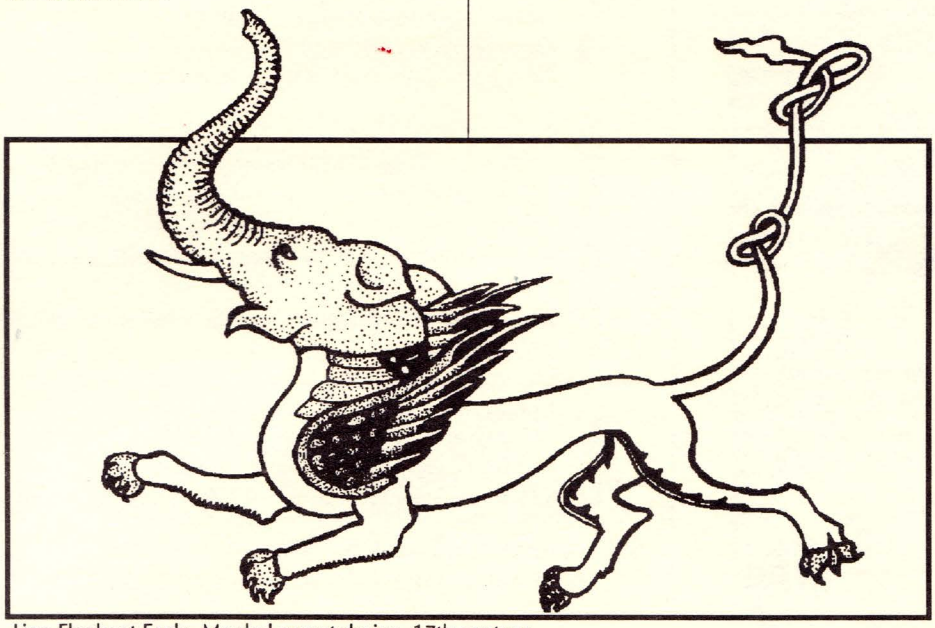
1. Emu Systems, who has pledged a digital sampler that will allows us to record snips of whale vocalizations and modulate them in many different ways before transmitting them back into the water.

2. Harvey Starr of Starrlabs has pledged a wholesome discount of a MIDI guitar, adapted to our unique needs. We can store several whale calls within the guitar's onboard circuitry and then play a note, a chord, a rhythm, a melody that contains the acoustic information of the whale's own sound. For our purposes, the instrument, called a Ztar, will be completely waterproofed to facilitate playing on boats and possibly, directly in the water.

3. Newer Technology has pledged memory, battery, port, and processor upgrades for an Apple powerbook. With these upgrades in place, any of several

versions of the mac powerbook can be used for the processor-intensive audio and video applications we demand .

But the hardware still lacks a key component, in fact the very foundation of this digital underwater sound system. We need a laptop computer, either new or used. It must be more than 100 mhz, must have an active screen, and it must have at least one pcmcia slot to accomodate a streaming audio card. Ideally we seek an Apple powerbook 5300, 1400, or 3400. However, a pentium machine will also do the job. If you have a used one, or can help us locate one, new or used, we will be very grateful. For more info, either fax us at 360.378.4020, or email us at beluga@rockisland.com. All donations are tax deductible.



Lion Elephant Eagle, Moghul carpet design, 17th century,

World Whale Day

PRESS RELEASE: A day of celebration for all who love whales and dolphins. In the tradition of Earth Day, World Whale Day begins a new yearly tradition at Summer Solstice, Saturday, June 21, 1997 and yearly thereafter. People are invited to visit their nearest coasts to participate in whale watching, and World Whale Day sponsored conferences and events. This year, seminars, followed by a day of whale watching are being planned for Maui, Monterey, and Newport, Oregon for the first years kick off events.

The World Whale Day organization will serve as the information hub via the website at:
www.peak.org/~reedbehr/worldwhaleday/

Orca Telepathy

PRESS RELEASE. According to the US Coast Guard an Orca pod has entered Yaquina Bay, Newport OR, during the first part of April for the last two years (1995-6) Yaquina Bay is directly adjacent to the tank holding Keiko, the orca who starred in film, *Free Willy*.

For the experiment, two time-synched video cameras will be used, one to record Keiko, and the other to record the wild orca pod observed by boat. A trained group of meditators will be notified when the wild pod enters the bay. This group will visualize the wild pod and Keiko breaching synchronously five times in a row. If the wild Orcas and Keiko do breach simultaneously, it strongly indicates a telepathic connection has been established between the humans and the whales. Keep tuned for results.

Three Poems

Sacred Poems is the title of a book recently submitted to the newsletter by poet Richard Bachtold. The writing and the message are both keenly wrought.
© Richard W. Bachtold copyright 1993, by Progressive Graphics, 55 maple St, Ware MA, 01087

Meditation

It is, as if the storm stops:
the body inhales and exhales,
and ocean waves eternally greet
and bid the shore farewell.

The Dying Sparrow

A lone sparrow on that deadly night
partook of a sacred feast, a fleeting joy,
that pierced the void like a flashing sun-beam
pressing against a frozen bosom
and then retreated to a darker, silent home--
a secret abode that words do not yet know.

The Wolf's Last Cry

Day slowly descends into fiery darkness;
tempered red tracks of time disappear;
the sinking sun sings a solitary song of sacrifice.
A single wolf's song gnaws at the heart's bone;
nightly, the poet painfully wails in the grasp of death,
a blue, terrifying cry that no one dares to hear.
Gods of night now triumphantly transform
this final poem, nearly lost forever
into the striking white light of Venus.